

the kitchen garden, we contemplated, with pleasure, the favourite seat of Catherine the Great that here presented itself: it was a long, tasteful garden sofa of iron, interlaced, painted green, and stood under the branches of an oak. Here she used to take her coffee; and, upon this very seat, she gave private and unrestrained audience to the late King of Sweden. I am enabled, from indubitable authority, to state, that the age of Catherine when she expired was seventy-five, although three years are taken from it in the calendar.

As we descended a little slope from Catherine's seat, we passed by two birch trees, revered by the superstitious Russians, on account of their having been, with a third of the same species, preserved, when the morass in which they grew was first converted into a garden, and the vegetable patriarchs of the place: we were gravely told that, when Paul died, the one which is missing perished from *excessive sensibility*. I never knew before, that nature had endued the birch with acute feelings: I remember, at school, it was admitted, *nem. con.* that it had the power of exciting them.

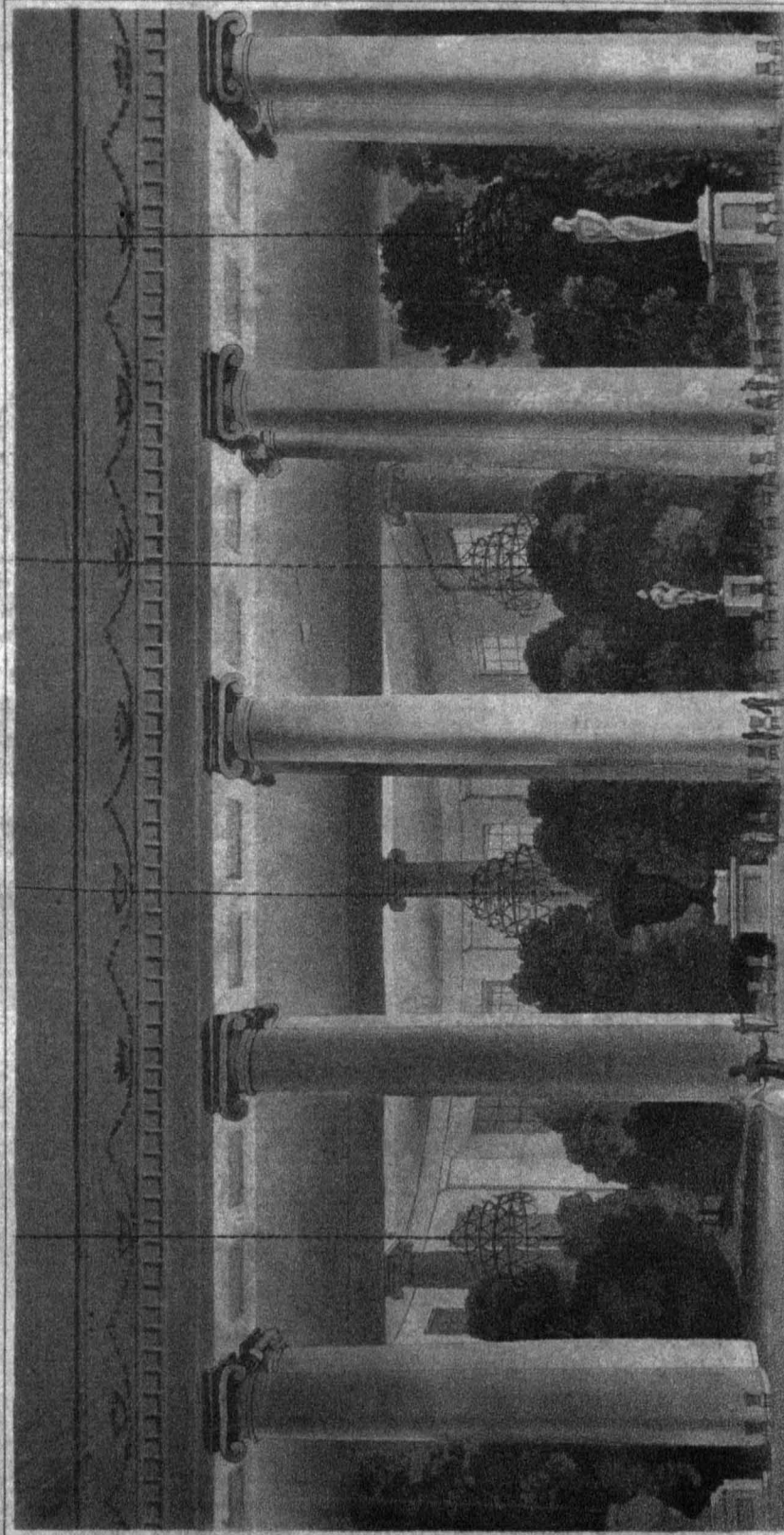
The first room we entered from the garden, was the celebrated hall in which Prince Potemkin gave the most gorgeous and costly entertainment ever recorded since the days of Roman voluptuousness: I am not able to communicate to my readers the ideas which this enormous room excited. If a

pagan were to be transported into it in his sleep, when he awoke he could not fail of thinking that he had undergone an apotheosis, and had been conducted to the banqueting-room of Jupiter. It was built after the unassisted design of Potemkin, and unites, to a sublime conception, all the graces of finished taste. This prodigious room is supported by double rows of colossal doric pillars, opening on one side into a vast pavilion,* composing the winter-garden, which I saw prepared for the Emperor, who resides here for a short time every year, just before I left Petersburg. This garden is very extensive: the trees, chiefly orange, of an enormous size, are sunk in the earth in their tubs, and are entirely covered with fine mould: the walks are gravelled, wind and undulate in a very delightful manner, are neatly turfed, and lined with roses and other flowers: the whole of the pavilion is lighted by lofty windows: from the ceiling depend several magnificent lustres of the richest cut glass.

Here, whilst the polar winter is raging without, covering the world in white, and hardening the earth to marble; when water tossed in the air drops down in ice; may be seen the foliage, and inhaled the fragrance, of an Arabian grove, in the soft and benign cinnate of an Italian spring. The novelty and voluptuous luxuriance of this green refreshing spectacle, seen through a colonnade of massy white pillars, and reduplicated by vast mirrors, is matchless. Between the columns,

now no longer incumbered with boxes for spectators as they formerly were, are a great number of beautiful statues and colossal casts: the two celebrated vases of Carrara marble, the largest in the world, occupy the centre of the room leading to the winter-garden. The Dying Gladiator, Cupid and Psyche, a recumbent Hermaphrodite, and many other exquisite productions of the chisel, afford ample gratification to the man of taste. Amongst the busts, is that of the Right Honourable Charles James Fox, by Nollekens; an admirable likeness of that distinguished orator. Paul, during his temporary aversion to the English, ordered this bust into the *cellar*: whether he intended that his spleen should carry the marks of some humour, I know not. His august successor removed it from the region of the Tuscan juice, and the depths of darkness, and ordered it to occupy its present station, where, by the side of Grecian and Roman virtue, the sun of heaven shines full upon it. Opposite to the winter-garden is a beautiful saloon, divided from the hall only by the colonnade, which is filled with rare antiques, principally busts. Amongst them a head of Achilles, and a small Silenus, are justly regarded as the most precious. During the darkened hours of Paul, he converted this palace into a garrison; and the hall, pavilion, and saloon, into a riding-school for his troops!

The rest of the rooms, which are upon the ground floor, have been elegantly but very simply fitted up by the present



Emperor, and all their gorgeous hangings, furniture, and decorations, have been removed and deposited in magazines. In one of the rooms there is a set of superb lustres, every drop of glass in which may be set in motion by clock-work, concealed in the centre, when it presents the appearance of a little cascade. The theatre, which has been much reduced, is still spacious and very handsome.

It may not be uninteresting to give a very brief description of the entertainment which I have before alluded to, as I received it from Mr. Gould, who contributed his talents to augment the rich variety of that resplendent festival: Soon after Prince Potemkin's return from the conquest of Crim Tartary, under the influence of a gloomy prepossession that it would be the last time that he should have it in his power to pay due honour to his imperial benefactress, he resolved upon giving a banquet, which, in modern Europe and Asia, should have no parallel. What the expences attending it amounted to, were never known, but they must have been prodigious. For several months previous to the gala, the most distinguished artists were invited from distant countries to assist in its completion. The grand outline was designed by the Prince, and so various as well as vast were the parts, that not one of the assistants could form any previous idea of the whole of it. In the general bustle of preparation, the following anecdote, that proves the natural taste of Potemkin's mind, is related: He had

ordered a statue of Catherine to be formed of alabaster, which he intended should be raised upon a pedestal, in a temple of precious stones, in the winter-garden; for the motto upon its entablature he wrote: "To the Mother of my Country, and to me the most gracious." In his design, the artist had extended the hand and elevated the sceptre, in the formal style of our Queen Anne's appearance in wax-work; the critical eye of this Prince, although he has been termed, and in some instances justly, a splendid barbarian, in a moment perceived the deficiency of grace in the attitude, and ordered the sceptre to be inclined: the artist retired to another room in chagrin, and exclaimed, "This great savage has more taste than I have, who have been brought up in the lap of the Arts." Upon giving another direction, the artist stared, and remonstrated upon the enormous sum which it would cost: "What! Sir," said Potemkin, "do you affect to know the depth of my treasury? Be assured it stands in no need of your sensibility." After which his orders were obeyed without any reference to expenditure.

Nothing could exceed the public sensation which this fete excited. At length the evening arrived when the Prince was to appear in all his pomp and glory, before his fond and adored sovereign. The walls of these splendid apartments were most richly and beautifully illuminated, and decorated with various exquisite transparencies; and the stairs, hall, avenues,

and sides of the rooms were lined with officers of state, attached to the household of the Prince, and servants, in the most costly dresses, and magnificent liveries. The orchestra exceeded six hundred vocal and instrumental musicians, and announced the entrance of the Empress and her court, richly attired, by a grand overture and chorus, which reverberated through the colonnades and saloons. Potemkin conducted his Imperial visitor to an elevated chair glittering with gold and diamonds: midway between the columns were boxes gilt with pale gold, and lined with green silk, filled with spectators in gala dresses. The festivity commenced with a dance of youths of both sexes, habited in white, and covered with pearls and jewels, at the head of whom were the present Emperor and the grand duke Constantine his brother. After the dance, and the most costly refreshments, the party repaired to the theatre, at the other end of the palace, where an occasional piece, composed in honour of the Empress, was performed, in which all the powers of singing, acting, dancing, dress, scenery, and decorations, were displayed. Upon the conclusion of the drama, the audience rose, and as if impelled by magic, the benches, touched by springs, moved and formed into tables and little seats, which were almost instantaneously covered with the richest viands, served up in gold and silver. The curtain again rose, and discovered a hall of mirrors, from which descended globular lustres of crystal, and a table appeared covered with

the rarity of almost every region, splendidly served in gold; and at the head, upon a throne gilded and glittering with precious stones, sat the Empress surrounded by her court, the most brilliant in Europe. Such were the arrangements in this place, that every one could see and be seen. In the colossal hall were spread tables filled with delicacies and the most costly wines, and at the head of it was a prodigious massy cistern of solid silver, containing sterlet soup, which is said alone to have cost ten thousand rubles. During this splendid repast, in every room the softest music was heard, which rather enlivened than restrained the current of conversation. Universal decorum and hilarity prevailed; every wish was anticipated, every sense was gratified.

The banquet was followed by a succession of magnificent exhibitions, and the Empress did not retire till midnight. As she proceeded to her carriage, it was observed that she appeared much affected by the homage which had been paid to her, encreased, perhaps, by the tender remembrance of departed hours; and as she turned to bid the Prince adieu, she could scarcely support herself: at this touching moment, Potemkin fell upon his knees, and covered her hand with his tears and kisses: it was destined that he should never more behold her under that roof, and his mind seemed to be fully possessed of the idea. A short time afterwards, as he was proceeding from Yassy to Nicolaief, he was seized with a violent cholic,

which it is supposed was produced by his singular irregularities; he alighted from his travelling carriage, supported by his nieces, with difficulty reached a bank on the side of the road, and expired in their arms. His remains were interred with magnificent honours, at Cherson, on the banks of the Dnieper, and a splendid mausoleum was raised to his memory by the order of her czarian majesty.

The dislike which Paul ever bore towards Potemkin, principally on account of his being the favourite of his imperial mother, induced the Emperor, during the dreadful subversion of his mind, to order the body of the Prince to be raised and exposed, and the mausoleum destroyed. A lady whom I met, and who was obliged, during this fearful period, to take refuge in the Crimea, beheld the ruins of the tomb, and the remains of the Prince exposed to the birds of the air.

To what trifles do many persons owe their elevation: Potemkin was indebted for his honours and fortunes to a *feather*. In the revolution which gave the late Empress sole possession of the throne, she appeared at the head of the Ismailof guards, when Potemkin, a young officer in the cavalry, perceiving that she had no feather in her hat, as she appeared on that momentous occasion *en militaire*, rode up to her and presented his. This extraordinary man experienced, in early life, a disappointment of the heart, which so frequently forces the

mind out of its proper sphere, and unsettles it for ever. Potemkin rushed into the field of battle, and in search of death obtained glory. The cruel fair one still rejected him, notwithstanding his scars and honours, became violently smitten with an ugly old man, whom she married, and hated for ever after.

Potemkin very frequently refused to pay his tradesmen: it is said that a very celebrated French veterinary professor went from Vienna to Petersburg, for the purpose of curing a beautiful charger, that had been presented to the Prince by the Emperor Joseph II., and which was so ill that the medical world of Petersburg had given it over. The Professor built a stable for the animal upon a particular construction, and after the most incessant attention succeeded in restoring it to health. When the horse-doctor waited upon Potemkin with the joyful news, and expected to be profusely paid for the heavy sums of money which he had expended, and for his time and skill, he was forbidden the sight of the Prince, never could see him afterwards, and never was paid: yet notwithstanding these occasional acts of avaricious dishonesty, and although his property was estimated at nine millions of rubles in cash, forty-five thousand peasants, besides two pensions one of seventy-five thousand rubles, and another of thirty thousand rubles, for his table, such was his prodigality that he was frequently embarrassed. In winter he used to wear a muff of the value of one thousand pounds.

In one of the Prince's journies to the Crimea, Mr. Gould attended him, being at that time his head gardener, and was preceded by several hundred assistants. Whenever the Prince halted, if it were only for a day, he found his travelling pavilion raised, and surrounded by a garden in the English taste, composed of trees and shrubs, raised, and carried forward as the cavalcade proceeded, and divided by gravel walks. Yet, strange to relate, amidst this Asiatic pomp, whilst the subordinate attendants fared upon every dainty that wealth could purchase, the poor Englishman, whenever the Prince requested him to travel in his carriage, which frequently occurred, was obliged to put up with the most homely fare, which Potemkin, always irregular and eccentric, generally preferred. At a sumptuous entertainment, where every rarity of epicurism invited the appetite, the Prince has been known to order a raw carrot, or turnip, and to dine upon it.

I must relate the following little anecdote, and then I have done with Potemkin. One day, in the course of their journey, they halted at Bender, in Bessarabia, where, whilst the Prince was alone at dinner, Mr. G. rambled about the neighbourhood, for the purpose of discovering the scite, or remains, of the house of Charles XII. of Sweden, in which, on the twelfth of February, 1713, he and a few followers madly bade defiance to the whole Ottoman army, after having been repeatedly and earnestly entreated to leave the dominions of the Grand

Turk. After a diligent search, with the assistance of some of the natives, the English gardener discovered the ruins which the eccentric spirit of the Swedish King had rendered so interesting, and exultingly returned to the Prince with the intelligence, who exclaimed, with liberal joy, "the English discover every thing," immediately proceeded to it; and, after regarding its remains with a very lively sensation, ordered the house to be repaired, and partly rebuilt, and a garden to be constructed round it, which were accordingly done, as a monument of his respect for the conqueror of Narva.

CHAP. XVI.

ENGLISH GROUND IN RUSSIA—NATIONAL BATHS—A NEW SECT—
 HOW CUSTOMS VARY—A PANACEA—VISIT TO THE EMPEROR'S
 GREATEST FAVOURITE—A RECIPE FOR REVOLUTIONISTS—WILD
 DOGS—THE MARBLE CHURCH AND PASQUINADE—ACADEMY OF
 ART—A TRAVELLER'S CIVILIZING IDEA—A ROW TO KAMMENOI
 OSTROFF—DELICACY AND GRATITUDE—BRAVERY AND GENERO-
 SITY OF GUSTAVUS III. TO HIS BARGEMAN—AN ELEGANT AND
 GRATEFUL COMPLIMENT—RUSSIAN MUSIC—ITS EFFECT UPON ITA-
 LIAN EARS AND COWS—FOREST ON FIRE.

DURING my stay at Petersburg, I paid several visits to the country houses of the English merchants on the Peterhoff road, where they live in great elegance. In the gardens of one of them, I trod with delight upon British ground: an ardent love for his country had induced the hospitable owner, at a great expence, to bring a quantity of English ballast from British ships to cover his walks with. Every garden is furnished with large swings, capable of holding two persons standing, and one between, sitting. Of this diversion the Russians are very fond. As I was roving in my friend's grounds I heard the cry of some hounds in an adjoining kennel, belonging to a Russian nobleman: the nobility are very fond of the sports of the field.

The gentlemen of the English factory have a regular pack and sporting establishment at Garrella. Having assumed a tolerable shabby dress, no difficult thing for a traveller at any time to command, for the purpose of qualifying ourselves for the approaching scene, and to prevent the suspicion of improper motives; we proceeded to the great national bath on a Saturday, which seems to be a purifying day every where.

After passing over a raised wooden path, by the side of a long wooden wall, we halted at a house built of the same materials, which formed the grand entrance. Here, upon paying five copecs a-piece, from a hole in a dark shed, or magazine of birch rods with the leaves on, a hand poked out one of them to each of us, which we took, without at the time knowing for what purpose they were to be used. On the entrance on each side were stalls of black bread, little pies, quass, and liqueurs. In the first court we beheld men and women indiscriminately mingled together, in a state similar to that which preceded the slightest notion of breeches and waistcoats. They were arranged like so many hounds in a dog-kennel, upon benches tier above tier, where they were wringing their beards and combing and plaiting their hair. In the middle of the yard was a jet d'eau playing into a great wooden cistern; as the bathers came out of the vapour-room, red and reeking with heat, they ran to this tank, and filling a bucket with cold water, raised it, and threw it over their heads. When these baths

- are near a river they plunge into it, and in the winter roll themselves in the snow.

I opened the door of the vapour-room, in which I could not continue above a minute, and in that time a profuse perspiration came over me. The room was capacious, women and men were piled one above another amphitheatrically; the vapour which filled the room, and gave it the atmosphere of a digester, was produced from water being thrown upon a great number of heated stones, some of them red hot. In this place, to assist the cause of perspiration and washing, they exchange the little *tender and delicate offices* of flogging, soaping, and rubbing each other down. The Russians in this, as well as many other customs, bear a strong analogy to the Grecians. These scenes, such is the effect of habit, are seldom productive of libertinism, even amongst the natives; to every foreigner they cannot fail to be offensive and repulsive. If a painter wishes to delineate a Venus, or even any part of the figure, let him not go to a Russian bath for a model. My curiosity was soon satisfied, I visited no other part of the building, and right glad was I to quit this disgusting scene. These baths, however, which are to be found in every village, prove that the Russians are naturally clean. After these ablutions, clean shirts and shifts are put on for Sunday.

It is highly interesting to observe how nations differ from

each other in their customs, and how frequently they reverse them. As we are upon the subject of bathing, I cannot help mentioning that, as I was walking with some English ladies in the Summer Gardens one evening, I saw about sixty men and women enjoying themselves in a small canal which runs from the Neva to the Michaelleski palace. Public as this spectacle was, there seemed to be the most perfect innocence amongst all the parties. One man was very desirous that I should see how well his wife could swim; and a Polish servant in waiting said, with great naiveté, to one of our English ladies, (a very amiable and sensible woman, in whose service he was,) "Madam, there is a fine seat there," pointing to one upon the side of the water, "where you can have an excellent view, and see the manner in which the Russians swim." Their manner is somewhat curious; they swim as if a dog had taught them. As I was one day walking by the side of the canal which runs before the Opera-house, I saw two young, and I think I may add, *modest* women, seeking shelter from the sun in the limpid stream. The forms of these Musidoras did more honour to their sex, than any which I had before seen.

The Russians beat all the doctors hollow. They have one simple (I know not if certain) cure for every description of disease, viz. two glasses of brandy, a scourging and soaping in the vapour-bath, and a roll in the Neva, or snow.

The smile of the sovereign has an universal influence; if you are well at court, it is well with you every where. Impressed with this truth, I resolved to visit the greatest favourite of his Imperial Majesty. As his sagacity was extraordinary; as he paid no consideration to exterior himself, nor minded it in others; and, moreover, as his residence was in the neighbourhood of the bath, I made up my mind to avail myself of his liberal notions, and seek an audience without returning to my hotel, a distance of three miles at least, to change my dress. Although, with respect to the appearance of his visitors, he was very accommodating, yet I found him, like all courtiers, inaccessible without a bribe; and accordingly, the honour of being introduced to him cost me something, it is useless now to say what. Was it not singular? Upon entering his apartment, which was very lofty, I found him heavily ironed by one leg, and guarded; yet, strange as this appeared, I was rejoiced to find, for his character stands very high, that he was not in disgrace. The personage I am speaking of was his Majesty's elephant, who was at least eleven feet high, and, like his Imperial master, majestic, yet gracious; and though fearfully armed with power, most discreet and gentle in its use. His establishment consisted of a faithful Persian, who received and repaid his affections.

In the ground behind the elephant's apartment, we saw some Calmuc sheep grazing, distinguishable from the same

species of animal in other countries, by a vast bag of hard fat, which grows from the rump. As I was returning from his elephantic majesty, a friend of mine pointed to a Russian who was crossing a bridge, and informed me that some years since he was one of the leading characters of a sect, whose tenets extended eternal rewards of happiness to those who, crossing the great design of God in creating man, deprived themselves of the possibility of becoming the fathers of families: against the spreading fanaticism of these monstrous visionaries, which aimed at the radical extinction of society, Catherine II. directed a prompt and decisive blow; those of its wretched and deluded followers who are known, are branded, wherever they appear, with public derision.

Catherine put down a sect still more formidable, and by the following whimsically wise manner, saved her people from the baneful contagion of French principles. During that revolution, which portended ruin to all the sacred establishments of all nations, when in England Pitt trampled out the brightening embers, and saved his country from the devouring flames, a group of mischievous emissaries from France arrived at Petersburg, and began, in whispers amongst the mob, to persuade the poor droshka driver, and the ambulatory vender of honey quass, that thrones were only to be considered as stools, and that they had as much right to sit upon one of them as their empress: Catherine, concealing her real appre-

hensions, availed herself of the powers with which she was clothed, without shedding a drop of blood. She knew ridicule to be, in able hands, a powerful weapon, and resolved to wield it upon the present occasion. One evening the police officers were ordered to seize all these illuminated apostles of liberty, and bear them away to the lunatic asylum, where the Empress had directed that their heads should be shaved and blistered, and their bodies well scoured by aperient medicines, and kept on meagre diet; this regimen was continued for fourteen days, when their confinement terminated. The common Russians had heard of their fate, and really believing that they had been insane, neglected and deserted them upon their re-appearance in the city with shorn heads, hollow eyes, and sunk cheeks, and all the striking indications of a recently bewildered mind. If this mild and ingenious project had failed, Catherine would have let loose all the energy of power, and for this purpose she rapidly caused to be built that vast edifice, now used for the marine barracks, which she destined for a state prison.

The transition from revolutionists to wild dogs is very simple and natural. About three versts on the left hand side of the Zarsko Zello road, is a wood infested with these animals. To this place dead horses, and all the rank garbage of the city, which a Russian stomach cannot relish, are carried.

These dogs never aim at *proselytism*, and are never seen beyond the boundaries of their thicket.

Having thrown aside our bathing dresses, we went to the palace of Saint Michael, where, as I have related, the last Emperor perished. As Paul had expressed so much aversion to the imperial mansions in which his mother delighted, I felt a curiosity minutely to examine a palace of his own creation. In addition to what has been before observed, the whole of this enormous pile was built by an Italian, of red Dutch brick, which at a distance has an animating appearance, upon a basement of hewn granite, that resembles a foundation of rock. The grand entrance from the great perspective through the riding-room and offices, is very handsome. Upon the architrave is written in Russ characters, as it was translated to me, the following singular motto: "May my house endure like the Lord's." The Russians observe, with their accustomed superstition, that the number of letters of this inscription correspond with the number of Paul's years, and that out of them an anagram may be composed, denoting that he who raised the building would perish by a violent death. The interior is vast, but very gloomy. The chambers which were shewn were stripped of their furniture and all their moveable decorations, which are lodged in the cabinet of jewels, but the ornaments which remained exhibited a style of costly magnificence; the doors, some of which were of

various-coloured glass, and richly gilded, were uncommonly superb. We saw the room in which the unfortunate Sovereign perished, and his private stair-case before mentioned. All the rooms, except those which were used for state, are occupied by persons belonging to the court; amongst others Mr. Cameron, the imperial architect, has a superb suite of apartments, those which were formerly occupied by the present Emperor and Empress before they ascended the throne: in one of which is a fire-place which had been encrusted with jewels. To the taste and genius of this gentleman, Russia is indebted for many of her beautiful architectural objects.

From the palace of St. Michael, we went, by a special appointment and permission, obtained after much trouble, to the Academy of Arts, and in our way stopped at the marble church of St. Isaac, which was erected, but not finished, by the late Empress: it is entirely built of Siberian marble, porphyry, and jasper, at an immense cost, has a vast copper dome gilded, and is the most magnificent place of worship in Petersburg; yet, after all, it has a very *sombre* appearance without.

The late Emperor, disgusted, as I have already explained, with every thing which had engaged the care and regard of his Imperial mother, raised in ridicule a little tower of brick, covered with a small dome, on the west side of this temple. During the calamitous state of his mind, an indiscreet wag

affixed to the door of the church the following pasquinade, in Russ verses : " To Paul the First, Emperor, &c."

" In *marble* should thy mother's mem'ry shine;
In perishable *brick* and *plaster* thine."

The writer paid dearly for his wit; he was discovered, knouted, had his nostrils torn, and was sent to Siberia. Upon the accession of the present Emperor, application was made by his friends for his release, which was granted, and a miserable mutilated wretch was restored to those who could with difficulty recognize him.

The interior of this building is truly magnificent, being entirely composed of the most precious Siberian marble. Near the altar was an elegant pulpit, the only one that I saw in any of the Greek churches: it was built by the orders of the late Empress, who was desirous of enlightening her people in their faith by devotional discourses.

The Academy of Arts is an enormous pile of quadrangular brick building, in the Vassili-Ostroff. In the council-room we were shewn a beautiful golden medal of the head of Paul, by the present Empress dowager, which at once proves the taste of her mind, and the powerful affections of her heart. In the hall of statues were a great number of fine casts from the antique, particularly a beautiful one of the Belvidere

Apollo: the original, in the Imperial Museum at Paris, afforded me the greatest delight I ever experienced in contemplating any work of art, and which I greatly preferred to the Laocoon. Amongst the pictures was a perfect and precious piece of painting, in fresco, from Herculaneum. As we passed through a suite of rooms, in which the youngest class of students, from the age of eight or nine years, were drawing (all of whom, as well as the rest of the pupils, are clothed, educated, and maintained, at the expence of the crown), we saw some promising works of art; but, strange to relate, they were principally confined to the younger artists: the tree looks healthy towards the roots, but weakens as it spreads. I could not help observing, that most of the adult students were occupied in painting whole and half length likenesses of the Emperor, in his regimentals, instead of attending to the works of the antient masters, several of whose productions adorn their galleries. The Almighty Disposer of the Universe has limited nations, as well as individuals, to their proper share of his beneficence. Whilst he has determined that the vine of the Tyrol shall never bend with its luscious grape upon the shores of the Frozen Sea, he seems to have allotted a more benign region to Painting, and to have precluded her from wandering far in the north. To the Russian that god has been bountiful:—but Russia has never yet sent an illustrious painter into the world:—it may be too confident to say she never will.

In the hall of architecture were some exquisite models; many in cork, of Roman ruins; the principal were a prodigious one of St. Peter's at Rome, which entirely filled a large room; its dimensions admitted two of us to stand under its dome, and another of the kazan. In the hall of statuary we saw several students at their occupations, who displayed considerable ability: there were here some beautiful casts, from Canovre's statues, many of which are in Prince Usupoff's gallery. The adjoining rooms to this were for the accommodation of the engravers and medallists.

The late Empress lavished enormous sums upon this institution, which, if it does not ultimately reach the perfection of similar establishments in more genial climates, will at least have the merit of having made some advancements. After the profuse magnificence of Catherine, and the thoughtless waste of the imperial treasure during the short reign of his disastrous predecessor, Alexander has most judiciously confined himself to a cautious and scrupulous expenditure. Russia is unquestionably much indebted to the genius and spirit of the late Empress; but it was impossible that *extended* civilization could be the fruits of her costly culture. In raising magnificent palaces, she raised so many monuments to her memory, which at first *surprised* the common Russian, but never *informed* him; and, in doing so, she too much neglected the cottage. If I dare intimate the spot where, in such a country,

the spirit of civilization should commence her operations, I would point to the hovel of felled trees, where the smoke issues through the same hole which admits the light: *ameliorate the domestic economy of rude and abject nature. Take care of the peasantry*: the higher classes are pretty nearly the same all over the world. The reverse of this plan will ever present the hideous spectacle of a voluptuous and vicious nobility, and of a people corrupt before they are refined; or, in the language of a shrewd observer of mankind, "rotten ere they are ripe." As far as my observation and information extended, I should conceive that the civilization of Russia would be rapidly promoted, after the removal of that most frightful and powerful of all checks, *slavery*, by improving the farms, by establishing colleges for the education of those who are destined to the priesthood, by reducing the number of holidays, by instituting rewards for menial integrity at the end of a given period, and by preventing parents from betrothing their female children before the age of consent, and contrary to their will.

The day when we visited the places before described being remarkably fine, Captain Elphinstone, of the Russian navy, proposed a visit by water in his barge to Kammenoi Ostroff, a little seat, and the favourite residence of the Emperor, about seven versts from the city. The bargemen were very fine fellows, clean shaved, and dressed in clean shirts. As we

rowed round the islands formed by the Petrovka, branching from the Neva, my gallant friend gratified me, by relating the following anecdote of the delicacy and fortitude of Catherine's mind. After the battle between the Russian and Swedish fleets off Cronstadt, in May 1790, Captain Elphinstone, then a very young lieutenant, was dispatched by his uncle, Admiral Creuse, to Catherine, who was at that time at the palace of Zarsko Zelo, with an account of the successful manœuvres of her fleet. For four days and nights preceding the Empress had taken no rest, and but little refreshment, the greater part of which time she had passed upon the beautiful terrace near the baths of porphyry; listening, with the greatest anxiety, to the distant thunder of the cannon, which was so tremendous, that several windows in Petersburg were broken by its concussion. It is said that, anticipating the last disaster, her horses and carriages were ready to convey her to Moscow. Young Elphinstone arrived at the palace late at night, in his fighting clothes, covered with dust and gunpowder, and severely fatigued with long and arduous duty. His dispatches were instantly carried to the Empress, who ordered her page in waiting to give the bearer refreshments and a bed, and requested that he might on no account be disturbed. The gallant messenger availed himself of her graciousness, and "Tir'd Nature's sweet restorer, balmy sleep!" never quitted his eye-lids till the dawn had far advanced, during which period Catherine had sent three times to see if he were awake.

At length Captain Elphinstone, in all his *dishabille*, was conducted to her presence by her secretary, when she commenced an enchanting conversation, in which she complimented the gallantry and many naval achievements of his family; and after proceeding upon various topics for about half an hour, she said, calling him "my son," "Now let us proceed to business: I have received the dispatches, which have afforded me infinite satisfaction; I thank you for your bravery and zeal; I beg you will describe to me the position of the ships," which, as Captain E. explained, she indicated with her pencil upon a leaf of her pocket-book; and as she gave him her orders to the Commander in Chief, she presented him with a rouleau of ducats, a beautiful little French watch, and, although very young, promoted him to the rank of Captain.

It was during this battle that the Swedish monarch behaved with his accustomed distinguished gallantry: As he was rowing in his barge, and giving his orders, in the thickest of the battle, a shot carried away the hand of the strokesman, and at this moment a small Russian vessel of war, discovering the King, bore down upon him; the brave and generous monarch, seeing the accident which his poor bargeman had sustained, and his own personal peril at the same time, calmly took out his handkerchief, and bound it over the wound, then leaped on board one of his gun-boats, and miraculously escaped, by that good fortune which never favours little minds,

at the instant when his barge was boarded by the enemy, the cushions of which were preserved in the apartment of Captain Elphinstone, in the marine barracks, as trophies of war and of humanity.

A short time after the Swedish fleet had retired, the gallant and venerable Admiral Creuse, who commanded the Russian fleet, paid his respects to his sovereign. Owing to the corpulency of the Admiral, the narrow plank floor of the presence-chamber shook with his weight, which the hero remarked with some little humour, to Catherine, when she turned this trivial circumstance into the following beautiful compliment :—" My brave Creuse, wherever you go you make the "earth shake under you, and your enemies tremble." As we rowed along we passed several national baths, from which the people precipitately issued in a stream of perspiration, and plunged into the river. They regard these transitions from extreme heat to extreme cold as conducive to an invigoration of the frame. As we turned up the little Nevka, we saw several beautiful country houses and grounds: the chateau of Count Narishkin was of this description; it had a centre, surmounted by a vast copper dome painted green, and very extensive wings upon a ground floor; a flight of steps led to the principal entrance, shaded from the sun by a vast projecting awning of canvas; the whole edifice was built of wood, and painted of a light yellow. Several elegant yachts and pleasure barges with gay streamers, floating green houses and baths, were moored

before it; the whole had an Asiatic appearance. A superb pleasure-barge with twelve rowers, covered with a rich awning from stem to stern, passed us, in which was a lady of rank, and a little yellow humpbacked female idiot, who had the good fortune of being her *pet* ! The Russian nobility, whether from whim, genuine compassion, or superstition, I know not, are uncommonly fond of these little, sickly, shapeless, blighted beings: uniting man to monster, and apparently formed by Heaven to mock the proud presuming nature of those whom he has made after his own image. The imperial chateau is small, has a terrace in front towards the water, and a wood behind: as the Emperor was here we did not attempt to see the inside of it, but I understand most of the rooms are for use and comfort only. The Empress, who is one of the most amiable and the shyest being that ever wore a diadem, hurries with delight from the gaudy tumult of a court, to veil herself in the tranquil shades of this sequestered place; and the Emperor exhibits the same love of privacy. Is there no moral in their choice? Does it not point to the spot where only genuine happiness is to be found?

We went on board one of the imperial yachts, a beautiful vessel, the state-room of which was most elegantly fitted up. Soon after leaving Kammenoi-Ostroff, we passed Count Stroganoff's gardens, which are prettily laid out, and embellished with the customary decorations of hillocks, rustic temples, ar-

tificial rocks and waterfalls. The Count very liberally opens his garden gates on Sunday to the public, when the walks are very much crowded; and resemble, but in miniature, those of Kensington gardens. Upon our return, we rowed against the stream of the Neva a considerable way, and floated down with it, for the purpose of enabling our boatmen to take in their oars, and afford us a specimen of Russian vocal music. They first faced each other, and sat very close together, and upon a signal being given, the leader sang a little song alone, which, upon his striking a tamborine, all the party, steadfastly gazing upon each other, joined in, and although their voices at a distance frequently produce an agreeable harmony, such was the shrillness on the present occasion, that I could not help thinking the conclusion of the song by far the best part of it. When Captain E. was lying in his frigate a few years since off Palermo, he invited a party, in which were two Italian princesses, to a marine breakfast, during which the latter requested to be indulged with a native Russ chorus, the fame of which had reached them; the sailors, who were assembled round the cabin light, commenced their national song before their fair auditors expected it, who, terrified at the screaming sounds which issued from the strained throats of these untutored warblers, instantly raised their hands to their ears, and implored Captain E. to stop his men; but, convulsed with laughter, and overpowered by the din of the chorus, he was obliged to let them make a natural finale. When they had

stopped, Captain Elphinstone said, "Now, ladies, will you
"have a little more?" "Not for the world, my dear Captain, not
"for the world, we are quite content," was the universal cry.

Whilst I was upon a visit at the house of my much respected and hospitable friend John Venning, Esq., I used generally to be awakened by a cow-keeper, collecting, Orpheus-like, his cows together, by a very long pipe, from which he produced some strains by no means unpleasing. The dress and attitude of this fellow, with his instrument in his mouth, resembled very much some of the figures which I have seen upon Etruscan vases. For two or three days, whilst the wind was northerly, we were much annoyed in the city by a dense smoky atmosphere, arising from a large forest, which had been burning for several days, about thirty versts from Petersburg: to prevent the spreading of this terrible conflagration, two regiments were marched to the spot, who, after great exertion, by felling trees and digging trenches, succeeded in impeding its progress. Accidents of this kind are attributed to the reaction of intense heat from the rock, upon the dry moss which is frequently found upon it.

CHAP. XVII.

COURT CLOCK—WINTER PALACE, HERMITAGE—PLAYERS AND GOVERNMENT CARRIAGES—CONVENT DES DEMOISELLES—INSTABILITY OF FORTUNE—GENEROSITY IN A CHILD—THE FOUNDLING HOSPITAL.

IN order to observe engagements with punctuality, it is necessary that a traveller's watch should be set by the clock of the winter palace, which is the sun's vice-regent in Petersburg, and is certainly more sovereign than that of the Horse-Guards in London. I learned this piece of important information, as I proceeded with a party of friends to the Hermitage; not the matted cell of an anchorite, but a magnificent modern palace built by the late Empress, and connected by a light elegant gallery with an enormous mass of building, called the winter palace, built of brick stuccoed, and consisting of a basement floor, a grand and lesser story, supported with Doric columns, and adorned with balustrades, and an immense number of statues, many of which are said to be excellent, but as they are associated with the chimnies, their beauties are not discernible to gazers on the ground. This pile was built by the Empress Elizabeth, is grand from its magnitude, but very heavy:

within its walls are many courts, galleries, and passages, and stair-cases without number. In the winter it requires fifteen hundred stoves, or as the Russians call them pitchkas, and the resident English, peeches, to warm it.

What could induce Catherine to call one of the most costly and elegant palaces in Europe by the name of the Hermitage I cannot imagine; not more preposterous would it be to hear Windsor Castle denominated the Nutshell. Its situation on the banks of the Neva is very beautiful; the apartments are still magnificent, although much of their rich furniture has been removed, and are embellished with the Houghton and other choice collections, to which artists have free access to copy. One room was entirely filled with some of the finest productions of Vernet; there is also a great number by Teniers. Upon the same floor with the picture galleries, which, with the state-rooms, occupy the second story, is a spacious covered winter garden, filled with orange trees, and foreign singing birds, opening into a summer garden upon the top of the palace, in which there is a beautiful long gravelled walk, lined with shrubs and large graceful birch trees, whose roots I should think must have for some time threatened to make their way through the ceiling of the drawing-rooms below. The whole is adorned with statues, elegant garden sophas, and temples, and on each side are magnificent galleries. In the cabinet of curiosities I was much pleased with a faithful and exquisite

model of a Russian boor's farm-house in wax. In the music-room adjoining to this are some large and admirable pictures, by Sneyder, representing fish, fowl, and fruit. In the cabinet of jewels there is a rich display of all sorts of jewelry; and amongst others, under a great glass case, are the celebrated mechanical peacock, owl, cock, and grasshopper, of the size of life, which was made in England, at a vast expence, and presented by Potemkin to the late Empress. The machinery is damaged: the cock, mounted on a tree of gold, no longer crows, nor hoots the owl, nor does the peacock spread his tail, at the expiration of the hour, but the grasshopper still skips round to denote the moments. This animal is nearly the size of his more animated brethren in Russian Finland, which are said to be an inch and a half long. There were also several ivory cups, the fruits of the ingenuity of Peter the Great, whose versatility was such, that apparently with equal ease, he could bend from the founding of cities, leading armies into the field, and fighting battles, to building boats, turning wooden spoons and platters, and carving in ivory. Raphael's hall, one of the galleries running parallel with the garden, is superbly painted and decorated, and has a fine collection of minerals: its inlaid floor is uncommonly rich and exquisite.

I searched in vain for Sir Joshua Reynolds's celebrated Infant Hercules, purchased by the late Empress for the Hermitage. Upon enquiry I found that it had been removed

into a private apartment below, and was seldom shewn; the reason assigned was, that the Russians have a superstitious horror of death, and that as the subject was the strangling of the serpent by the infant god, it was on that account unpopular. Upon our return through the rooms, we went to the court theatre, connected with the Hermitage by a gallery over an arch, which crosses a cut of water from the Neva to the Moika canal. The space before the curtain is filled with seats rising amphitheatrically, and the whole, without being large, is elegant. The performers were rehearsing at the time: afterwards, as we were quitting the palace, my curiosity was excited by a number of Imperial coaches, presenting a gradation of qualities; some were tolerably good, some shabby, and others very old and crazy, to which must be added a very long vehicle, such as is used in England for conveying wild beasts, having four horses abreast, all drawn up before that part of the palace where the theatre is situated. Upon the conclusion of the rehearsal, the players descended: the tragedians and genteel comedians occupied the better carriages, the low comedians the more ancient and defective ones, and the chorus-singers, to the amount of about thirty, skipped into the long coach, and were all driven to their respective homes. These machines are kept for the sole service of the players.

Not far from the Hermitage, and upon a line with it, is

the magnificent palace raised by Catherine II. for Gregory Orloff, and afterwards allotted, by the late Emperor, to the last of the Kings of Poland: it is built of grey Siberian marble, and adorned with columns and pilasters of the same stone, of a brown and reddish colours. The balustrades of the balconies, and the frames of the windows, are of brass richly gilded. All the splendid furniture and moveable decorations have been removed, and the whole is now occupied by persons belonging to the court.

In consequence of the gracious orders of the Empress Dowager to that effect, we visited a very interesting institution under her immediate protection, the Convent des Demoiselles. This Imperial seminary, which has no equal in Europe, contains three hundred and seventy-two young ladies of nobility; and two hundred and forty daughters of citizens. There is also another institution under the same roof, called that of Saint Catherine, in which there are one hundred and eighty-eight children, of the inferior orders of nobility. The age of admission is six years. The noble young ladies are taught German, French, Italian, drawing, music, dancing, geography, embroidery, and every other elegant pursuit. The daughters of the bourgeois are instructed in what is useful alone, and can conduce to their making good tradesmen's wives. Their genius, or bias of mind, whenever it can be ascertained, is always consulted in their pursuits. The build-

ing is like a great town; it was formerly occupied by the monks of Smolnoi, who have been removed to accommodate much more useful and lovely members of society. In the centre is a vast neglected church, surmounted with a dome in the centre of four small cupolās, all of copper gilded. This edifice forms a venerable and prominent feature in the city. We were received at the grand entrance by some of the officers attached to the establishment, in full uniform, a dress which is worn by all male persons belonging to Imperial institutions, on account of the government being military. We were first conducted to the kitchen, where we saw and tasted a sample of the day's dinner, consisting of excellent soup, boiled beef, vegetables, and pastry. The young ladies are divided into classes of age, and distinguished by brown, blue, and green and white dresses. In the first school we were presented to her Excellency Madame Adlerberg, the directress of the convent, who appeared, decorated with the order of Saint Catherine, a lady of great beauty, and elegance of deportment; her mind and character were explained by the smiles and looks of affection which every where attended her, as we proceeded through the schools. In the sick room there were only three patients, who were most tenderly attended by the proper nurses; the name, age, disorder, and treatment of the invalid, is inscribed upon a little tablet fixed over her head to the back of the bed. The dormitories were remarkably neat, and even elegant. Some of the little girls surprised us

by the excellence to which they had attained in drawing. In the Greek church belonging to the convent, we were attended by the priest in his full robes, who shewed us a magnificent cup of gold studded with jewels, used in devotion, the work of the Empress dowager.

The mortality among the children is very inconsiderable; upon an average only two die annually out of eight hundred, unless after filling up of several vacancies, occurring at the same time, when the children admitted from the provinces sometimes bring diseases with them. In the blue class we saw an instance of the mutability of fortune, in a little girl about eleven years of age, the Princess S—— the grand-daughter of the late King of Poland. In the dispersion of the family she was left destitute. Her mother, in a frenzy produced by the dethronement of her father, threw her son, a child, from a balcony into the street, and dashed out his brains. This orphan relic of an august and most unfortunate family, was saved from actual want by the humanity and feeling of the Princess Biron, with whose daughter she is educated in the convent. The young Princess Biron, in the blue dress of her class, underwent an examination in French and writing in our presence, and acquitted herself with infinite credit. In the green and white class, where the eldest young ladies are, we were entertained with some very delightful Russ and French airs and choruses, accompanied by the harpsichord.

In the institution of Saint Catherine, under the direction of Madame Bredkoff, an elderly lady of distinguished talents, and sweetness of disposition, the following little circumstance occurred, which will prove that the Russian mind, whatever may have been said of it, is susceptible of feeling and generosity. In this institution, which is supported by the Empress-dowager, a limited number only of young ladies are admitted, free of expence, by ballot; but others are received upon paying, as it is termed, a pension. At the last admission, two little girls, the eldest not exceeding ten years of age, the daughter of a naval captain, who in this country is noble, the father of a large family, presented themselves, and drew, the one a prize, the other a blank. Although so young, they knew that fate had, in this manner, resolved upon their separation; they felt it, and wept. Another young lady, to whom the next chance devolved, drew a prize, and observing the distress of the sisters, without holding any communication with their parents, or with any other person, spontaneously ran up to the luckless little girl, presented her with the ticket, and leading her up to the directress, said, "See, Madam, I have drawn a prize, but my papa can afford to pay the pension, and I am sure will pay it for me: pray let one who is less fortunate, enjoy the good that has happened to me." This charming anecdote was immediately reported to the Empress-dowager, who expressed the highest delight, and paid, out of her own purse, the pension of the little benefactress.

An idea has gone forth, that when the period arrives for the fair pupils to quit the convent for the great theatre of the world, so many years of sequestration from it renders them totally ignorant, awkward, and that they enter society with little less surprise than that which a man born blind, and suddenly restored to sight, would express on his first contemplation of objects. But this remark is completely disproved by the good-breeding and polished manners which the young ladies displayed in the convent: in addition to which it may be observed, that every month, or oftener, they have a public and splendid ball, which is always crowded by people of fashion, their relations or friends, with whom, upon these occasions, they have unrestrained intercourse. At Easter, and other festivals, by the order of the Empress-dowager, they take a ride round the city to see the diversion of sliding down the ice-hills, or the various festivities incident to the occasion and season. The Empress-dowager takes great pleasure in visiting this institution; and whenever she appears, the young people crowd round her, to kiss the palm of her hand, as if she were their common parent. In other countries there may be institutions upon the same principle, but not one of the same magnitude; there the sovereign thinks he has discharged a splendid duty if he allot a sum of money for its support, without seeing to its appropriation, or cherishing the establishment by his presence; but here the Empress-dowager, the Empress, and other branches of the Imperial family, are personally and

actively assistant. When Madame Bredkoff was sent to Moscow to organize an institution there, similar to that of St. Catherine's, the Empress-dowager, during her absence, took possession of her chair, and discharged all her functions.

It is with great pleasure I mention another instance of the munificence of the Dowager Empress, in an establishment called the Institute of Marie, which is wholly supported out of her private purse, and costs one thousand five hundred pounds per annum. In this seminary, which is under the able direction of Madame Luky, fifty-six girls are clothed, maintained, and educated in French, German, Russ, arithmetic, drawing, and embroidery. In the latter, the young pupils have attained to such a high state of perfection, that the state dresses of the Imperial family are frequently made by them. At eighteen, the fair *élèves* are provided with respectable situations in genteel families; or married, when a little dowry is presented to them. The qualification required for the admission of a pupil is, not that she should have interest or friends, but that she should be *destitute* and *friendless*! The whole resembled a large, genteel, and happy family. When the money of an empire is thus expended, it is like the sun drinking up the exhalations of the earth, to return it in refreshing showers of dew.

By the same gracious order of the Empress-dowager, we

were admitted to the foundling-hospital, one of the most extensive and superb buildings in the residence. In this establishment, six thousand children, the offspring of shame or misery, are received, and protected.—Sublime idea! but let us examine whether the end of this great and benevolent design is answered. The children are classed according to their age: in the first room were several little creatures who had been left one, two, or three, days before, at the office of secrecy, where the wretched mother at night, if nature will admit, with a trembling hand rings the bell, resigns her child to a porter, receives a ticket of its number, and in agony retires. When we entered a large room where the nurses were suckling the infants, the result of our enquiry and observation, in which I was much indebted to a very intelligent lady, who was herself a mother, and who accompanied us, was that, although the nurses, generally the wives of boors, were examined by surgeons, and bathed upon their admission, yet many of them displayed the effect of invincible habit, and were very dirty, notwithstanding the greatest vigilance and care to keep them clean; and, as many of them had nursed their own children seven or eight months before upon wretched fare, their milk was neither rich nor copious: a circumstance which was visibly proved, by the meagre and unhealthy appearance of the nurslings. The difficulty of procuring an adequate number of nurses is great indeed; and with a sufficient quantity of milk, utterly impossible. The mortality is very great:

out of two thousand five hundred infants received the preceding year, five hundred perished ! The conclusion is plain. Whilst the principle of this infant asylum is unquestionably propitious to libertinism, its present constitution and economy are ungenial to population. If this establishment were upon a *smaller scale*, it might possibly answer ; but, extensive *as it is*, it seems to overstep its object by too large a stride, and to countenance an opinion, that the cause of humanity and policy would be more efficaciously promoted even were no other barriers opposed to infanticide than nature and the laws. We repeatedly observed that the boys did not look so healthy as the girls, which may be owing to the nature and hours of their labour being somewhat greater : indeed, eight hours toil is too much for boys of tender years. The gardens are very extensive : we there saw a recreation which is a great favourite with the young Russians. A broad flat board, about eight feet long, was placed centrically over another of the same size and shape : a girl, about fourteen or fifteen years of age, stood at one extremity of the upper board, and at the other end two smaller girls, who, by alternately springing up, tossed each other to the height of five or six feet, from which they descended with uncommon skill and steadiness. A gentleman of the party, at the great hazard of his neck, unsuccessfully endeavoured to partake of the pastime. From the windows of the Foundling-hospital, in a sequestered part of the city, we saw the top of a private lying-in house, where only the

patients and nurses are admitted, and the offices of tenderness and humanity are discharged, without curiosity, enquiry, or developement.

I was very fortunate in being at Petersburg during two great causes of national festivity: the name day, as the Russians call it, of the Empress-dowager: and the nuptials of one of her daughters, the Grand Duchess Maria, a beautiful and amiable princess, about seventeen years of age, to the only son of the reigning prince of Saxe Weimar, a young man of twenty. It was the wish of the Empress-dowager that these events should be celebrated on the same day. This marriage, unlike the severe policy which state ceremony imposes on such occasions in other countries, had been preceded by a course of attentions and tenderness for two years preceding, during which period the young Prince had resided with the Empress-dowager, who wisely thought with Shakespeare, that

——“Marriage is a matter of more worth
Than to be dealt in by attorneyship.
For what is wedlock forced, but a hell;
An age of discord, and continual strife?
Whereas the contrary bringeth forth bliss,
And is a pattern of celestial peace.”

On the third of August, N. S. I went with a party of friends to the Winter-palace, the vast area before which was covered with carriages; on our arrival we proceeded up the grand marble stair-case, through a suite of superb rooms, to an apart-

ment of the foreign ministers, who were splendidly attired. In this room was the lady of the British ambassador, who in her dress and person did honour to the magnificence and beauty of the British empire. All the rooms were uncommonly crowded with people in full gala dresses, and about one o'clock the procession moved from the Empress-dowager's apartment: after a long line of marshals and state officers, vying with each other in the splendour of their dresses, appeared the Emperor, in a plain suit of regimentals, leading the Empress-dowager by the hand, the Empress, in a superb dress covered with diamonds, walking by his side (the former always takes the precedence of the latter, by an ukase of Paul); then followed the beautiful Grand Duchess, between the young Prince of Weimar and the Grand Duke Constantine, in a blaze of jewelry: upon her head was a crown of diamonds, upon her shoulders a long robe of crimson velvet lined with ermine, the train of which was supported (and the intense heat of the weather called for all the support that could be afforded her) by several peers of high rank, and in her bosom she wore a most superb bouquet of flowers in diamonds; then followed the rest of the Imperial family, and a train of lords and ladies closed the whole. As they passed through the guard-room, which was lined with a detachment of gigantic guards, it was amusing to see how these colossal images curled their stiff whiskers with delight as their Emperor passed. When the procession entered the Greek church in the

palace, the priest and choristers commenced an anthem: the young couple stood upon a cloth of scarlet fringed with gold, whilst two officers of state held a crown on each of their heads, which part of the ceremony is observed towards the commonest Russians; then walked three times before the altar, each holding a lighted taper, exchanged rings, and drank three times out of the sacramental cup, after which the Metropolitan exhorted them: when he had concluded, the bride saluted the archbishop, and her family, and the procession returned. Upon the close of the ceremony a rocket was discharged from the granite terrace in front of the palace towards the Neva, when discharges of cannon announced the happy tidings to the people. About two hours afterwards a splendid banquet, for the whole court, was served in the grand marble hall, a room, according to my own stepping, two hundred and fifty feet long, and about forty feet high, having arched galleries for the accommodation of spectators, at the end and on the side opposite the windows: the Imperial table was covered with vases of gold, filled with the rarest flowers, pyramids of pines, and the finest fruits, elegantly arranged. Soon after the nobility were seated at the tables, which were covered with every delicacy, the grand master of the ceremonies made a buzzing noise, when the greatest silence immediately followed, the folding-doors opened, and the Imperial family entered, attended by a suite of state officers, and took their seats; when the pages in waiting, richly attired, each hav-

ing his right hand covered with a napkin, served the imperial dinner: a noble band of music played, and several fine airs were sung by a distinguished singer, which, on account of the vastness of the room and the frequent roaring of the cannon, were very imperfectly heard. When the Emperor rose and drank felicity to the young couple from a vase of gold, if my sight erred not, a tear bedimmed the eyes of the beautiful bride. During the banquet one of the pages, from excessive agitation, spilt some soup upon her robe, which she returned with a most gracious smile. In the hall were several running footmen who have the privilege of wearing at all times and in all places, their caps and feathers. With great difficulty we reached our carriage, through rooms crowded with cooks, and a great number of sailors in their best dresses, who, upon this occasion, were assistant scullions. Whilst we were at dinner at the hotel, we received a note from our ambassador, informing us that the Emperor had appointed half past six o'clock in the evening for our introduction to him, previous to the ball: this honour, at such a time and on such an occasion, we were told, was against the usual etiquette of the Court, and therefore the more flattering. A short time before the Imperial family appeared, the nobility retired from the room where the presentation was to take place; the names of our party amounting to six, of whom four were English, were given to the Emperor by Count Sherametoff, who intro-

duced us. Upon the folding doors opening, a procession similar to that in the morning commenced; when the Emperor approached us the whole halted, and the Count, calling each by his name, introduced us to the Emperor, the Empress-dowager, and the Empress, by whom we were very graciously received. An Italian nobleman, who was presented with us, fell at the feet of the Emperor and endeavoured to embrace his knees, which the sovereign recoiled from, with a look that indicated how little a manly generous mind, like his, could be gratified with such servility. After this ceremony, the procession, which we followed, moved to St. George's hall: this magnificent apartment, more rich, though not so vast, as Potemkin's hall, is entirely gilded with various coloured gold, and illuminated by a profusion of richly gilded lustres: on each side were galleries crowded with spectators: on either side of the grand entrance were two enormous mirrors, rising above some exquisite statues of alabaster; and at the end, raised upon a flight of steps, stood the throne. As soon as the Imperial family entered, the band struck up an exquisite polonaise, which is rather a figure promenade than a dance, the weather being too hot for such exercise: the Emperor led out the bride, and walked to the time of the music, the rest of the Imperial family and the Court, amounting to about forty couple, following, up and down the room, forming curves, and various other figures. This recreation continued an

hour; a short time before it expired, I was introduced, through the favour of Madame B——, to the chamber of the bride and bridegroom. In front of the bed, under glass covers, were the bride's jewels, and a service of gold presented to her by her august family, and a golden salver containing a *loaf and salt*, which, according to the Russian custom, is presented by the Empress-dowager to her daughter on the night of her marriage, just before she unrobes: it is intended to express her wishes, that as the connection between parent and child is dissolved by marriage, she may never want the comforts of life.

The bed was a state one, the robes-de-chambre of the Princess were placed on a stool on the *right hand side*, and the slippers of the Prince on the *left*. Heavens! thought I, what a strange country this is! the postilions ride their horses on the wrong side, and the husbands sleep on the wrong side; but the remark was no sooner made than removed: it does not accord with the dignity of the empire that any Prince under Heaven should take the right of a Grand Duchess of Russia. Hymen had touched the tapers with his torch, and a band of merry-looking pretty girls, dressed in white, and adorned with flowers, were waiting to receive the happy bride, and let loose the virgin zone. As I quitted this bower of Eden I longed to leave behind me the following beautiful recipe for preserving love:

"Cool as he warms, and love will never cool:
Then drop into the flame a tear or two,
Which blazing up like oil, will burn him through;
Then add sweet looks, soft words, some sighs, no pout,
And take my word the flame will ne'er go out."

In the evening the city was magnificently illuminated: the house of British embassy shone with unrivalled elegance and splendour. As we rode up the Neva, after supper, we were uncommonly gratified by seeing the whole of the fortress, down to the water's edge, illuminated, which presented a spectacle the most brilliant, and completely novel, I ever beheld. Our bargemen again regaled us with one of their musical yells, the effect of which was encreased by the addition of two tamborines struck at random. In the evening, after the nuptials, the Imperial family went to the opera, when the theatre was superbly illuminated, and the court scènes were displayed, which presented the finest specimens of scenic painting I ever beheld. When the Emperor was about to leave his box, the people saluted him with the most enthusiastic applause, with which he was visibly affected.